



State Of California
California Commission On Teacher Credentialing
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Subject Matter Authorizations

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires that teachers hired to teach in Title I schools on or after July 1, 2002, and all teachers by July 1, 2006, be “highly qualified” or NCLB compliant in NCLB core academic subject areas. Effective January 1, 2005, additions to Title 5 Sections 80089.3 and 80089.4 allowed the Commission to issue Introductory and Specific Subject Matter Authorizations as another option to meet this requirement.

Introductory Subject Matter Authorizations

An Introductory Subject Matter Authorization authorizes the holder to teach the subject matter content typically included in curriculum guidelines and textbooks approved for study in grades 9 and below. This allows an employer to assign a teacher with an Introductory Subject Matter Authorization to teach a class in which the curriculum is for grades 9 and below but the students in the class may be in grades K-12.

Introductory Subject Matter Authorizations are available in the following subjects:

Art - must include course work in the content areas of art history including aesthetics and appreciation, two-dimensional art including drawing, painting, and printmaking, three-dimensional art including sculpture and ceramics, and photography/computer generated imagery

English – must include course work in the content areas of grammar or language structure, advanced composition, speech, drama or theatre, and literature

A Language Other Than English (specify) – must include course work in the content areas of grammar, composition, culture, conversation, and literature

Mathematics – must include course work in the content areas of algebra, advanced algebra, geometry, probability or statistics, and development of the real number system or introduction to mathematics

Music – must include course work in the content areas of vocal music including the analysis of repertoire and literature appreciation for developing musicians, instrumental music including the analysis of repertoire and literature appreciation for developing musicians, aural musicianship, keyboard, music history including music appreciation, world music, conducting and music theory

Science – must include course work in the content areas of biological sciences, chemistry, geosciences, and physics

Social Science – must include course work in the content areas of United States history, California history, world history, world civilization or world cultures, physical geography, and United States government

Introductory Subject Matter Authorizations may be added to the following credentials:

- Single Subject Teaching Credential
- Multiple Subject Teaching Credential
- Standard Elementary Teaching Credential
- Standard Secondary Teaching Credential
- Special Secondary Teaching Credential (in academic subjects only)

To qualify, individuals must satisfy all of the following requirements:

1. possess a valid prerequisite teaching credential
2. complete one of the following:
 - a. 32 semester units (48 quarter units) of non-remedial course work in the subject, including a minimum of three semester or four quarter units of course work in each content area. The balance of the units may be in any course within the subject category. (Exception: the subject of Science requires at least six semester or

eight quarter units in each of the four science content areas [biological sciences, chemistry, geosciences, and physics]), or

- b. a degree major from a regionally-accredited college or university in a subject directly related to the subject to be listed on the credential
3. submit a completed application ([form 41-4](#)) and current processing fee

Specific Subject Matter Authorizations

A Specific Subject Matter Authorization authorizes the holder to teach the specific subject in grades preschool, K-12, and classes organized primarily for adults.

Specific Subject Matter Authorizations are available in the following subjects:

Art History/Appreciation	English Composition	Physics
Biological Sciences	Geography	Plant Science
Chemistry	Geosciences	Three-Dimensional Art
Civics/Government	History	Two-Dimensional Art
Dance	Instrumental Music	Vocal Music
Drama/Theatre	Literature	
Economics (social science)	Photography	

Specific Subject Matter Authorizations may be added to the following credentials:

- Single Subject Teaching Credential
- Multiple Subject Teaching Credential
- Standard Elementary Teaching Credential
- Standard Secondary Teaching Credential
- Special Secondary Teaching Credential (in academic subjects only)

To qualify, individuals must satisfy all of the following requirements:

1. possess a valid prerequisite teaching credential
2. complete one of the following:
 - a. 32 semester units (48 quarter units) of non-remedial course work (Exception: the subject of History requires a minimum of 16 semester units in both world history and U.S. history.)
 - b. a degree major from a regionally-accredited college or university in a subject directly related to the subject to be listed on the credential
3. submit a completed application ([form 41-4](#)) and current processing fee

Course Work Requirements

Acceptable course work must be:

- a. completed with a grade of “C” or better (“credit”, “passing”, or “satisfactory” grades are acceptable)
- b. applicable toward a bachelor’s degree or a higher degree (elective or non-elective, non-remedial)
- c. taken at a regionally-accredited institution
- d. granted regular quarter or semester hour credit
- e. from the subject department of the subject matter authorization being sought

The following course work may be used as long as it meets the criteria listed above:

- a. community college, correspondence, online, or extension course work
- b. advanced placement units (requires an official transcript of the course and written verification from the college or university admission or registrar’s office that the units were used towards a bachelor’s degree and are in the subject category of the requested subject matter authorization)

(continued)

Unacceptable course work includes:

- a. course work that is not applicable toward a bachelor's degree or higher degree (remedial)
- b. professional development or continuing education units
- c. in-service training or workshops
- d. education and education methodology course work unless a letter is provided by the chair of the subject area department stating that the course is equivalent to one offered by that department
- e. course work from a department other than the subject matter authorization being sought unless a letter is provided from the chair of the subject area department stating that the course is equivalent to one offered by that department

For detailed information, including instructions for converting supplementary authorizations to subject matter authorizations, please refer to the [Subject Matter Authorization Guideline Book](#), available on the Commission's website.

References: California Education Code, Section 44225, and California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Sections 80089.3 and 80089.4